

REGULAR MEETING
BELMONT REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

TUESDAY, May 11, 2004

CALL TO ORDER 7:30 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Directors Present: Feierbach, Bauer, Warden, Mathewson, Metropulos

Directors Absent: None

Staff Present: Executive Director Kersnar, Assistant Executive Director Rich, Agency Attorney Savaree, Community Development Director Ewing, Public Works Director Davis, Agency Secretary Cook.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Junior Girl Scout Troop 654, Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Diane Smerdel, Liz Parker and Dorine Cole, Leaders.

ITEMS APPROVED ON CONSENT CALENDAR

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of April 13, 2004.

Approval of Resolution 417 Making a Determination that Planning and Administrative Expenditures of Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund Monies are Necessary for the Production, Improvement, or Preservation Of Low And Moderate Income Housing.

Action: On a motion by Director Bauer, seconded by Director Mathewson, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved by a show of hands.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Economic Development Implementation – Evaluating Success

Community Development Director Ewing stated that producing a cost benefit analysis of an Economic Development Plan is difficult, since it is economically driven and each component has a cause and effect. He reviewed a chart that was developed to compare the various implementation options, and noted that the top three topics of

these options were: 1) the community's sense of well-being and civic pride, 2) enhancement of existing businesses, and 3) increase in economic factors such as sales, employment, and property values. He added that intangible benefits and payoff time should be considered when choosing an implementation strategy, and he identified potential projects that would focus on specific objectives.

Director discussion ensued.

In response to Council questions and comments, Community Development Director Ewing stated that the most direct method of improving economic development was for the Redevelopment Agency to assemble and develop properties. He noted that this option was not favorably received during the Economic Development Summit.

Director Bauer stated that he supported the Redevelopment Agency being a player for control.

Director Feierbach stated that she supported code enforcement for existing businesses, the Chamber of Commerce's "Rise and Shine" program, and encouraging businesses to locate in Belmont. She supported using the Chamber in these efforts. She noted that developers have advised her that Belmont's permit process is difficult and should be made easier.

Director Warden stated that he supported dressing up the boulevards by using code enforcement, supporting existing businesses through the Chamber of Commerce, and an increase in economic factors. He stated that Belmont should be attractive to attract new businesses. He also noted that the City did not control use, but had control over zoning, and suggested using that control to leverage improvements.

Director Mathewson stated that he supported building improvements such as streetscape and façade improvements.

Community Development Director Ewing responded that an economic development director could assist in attracting new businesses. He stated that the Redevelopment Agency could acquire and develop property.

Director Warden noted that eminent domain is expensive.

Community Development Director Ewing responded that the Redevelopment Agency could partner with existing owners to leverage private money by providing seed funding. He suggested identifying sites for this activity, which could be done concurrently with code enforcement and business retention activities.

Director Warden stated that an economic development director was needed for business recruitment and retention. He also stated the Downtown Specific Plan is confusing and should be rewritten.

Director Feierbach stated that the current Plan could be modified rather than rewritten.

Community Development Director Ewing responded that the Plan could be reorganized by existing staff, and recommended not suspending the Plan, since its principles were important.

City Manager Kernsar stated that the issue of hiring an economic development director was not one of affordability, but of defining what to accomplish. He commented that this discussion has clarified the specifics for a potential position.

Director Warden stated that this position could fulfill multiple roles. Community Development Director Ewing responded that the focus should be on someone with true economic development experience.

ADJOURNMENT at this time, being 8:40 P.M.

Terri Cook

Agency Secretary

Meeting Tape Recorded and Video Taped

Tape No. 580